HAMS: LONG RANGERS

by W9HHX

W9HHX participated in the annual 160 meter (1.8 to 2.0 MHZ.) operating proficiency contest. For the event the club operated from WAUK-AM (1510 KHZ., 10KW.), Waukesha, using one of the 150 foot broadcasting towers at the transmitter site.

The special characteristics of this frequency band makes this type of contest especially challenging. Long distance communication is not easy on this band as adverse atmosphere fading causes signals to disappear rapidly. Power levels are much below those allowed on other amateur bands (100VS 1000 Watts), necessitating a good antenna. The best antenna for this band is a ¼ wavelength vertical. However, this represents a 125 foot tower, which is not standard equipment at most amateur stations. Thus the move to WAUK was arranged by John Aegerter, WA9GAR, who works at the transmitter site on a part-time basis.

Since WAUK-AM was on the air during daylight hours, contest operation lasted from dusk to dawn. Despite some equipment difficulties operations continued through the night with John, WA9GAR, Ray Weisling, WA9FUH, and Club Prexy Al Bingenheimer, WA9RYO taking turns at the key. The first night yielded 99 contacts and the second night 44 contacts. The second night total was reduced because most stations had already been contacted.

Other club stations known to have participated were W9YB, Purdue University, and W9YT, at the University of Wisconsin, Madison.